



Hawaii Chapter, MOAA  
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**Testimony of**  
**Thomas Smyth, President**  
**Military Officers Association of America, Hawaii Chapter**  
**Before the Committee on**  
**Public Safety, Government Operations and Military Affairs**  
**Thursday, February 3, 2011, 2:45 pm, Room 224**  
**SB 254 Relating to Veteran's Court**

**Chair Espero, Vice Chair Kidani and Committee Members**

**Our chapter of 400 retired and currently serving officers of the Uniformed Services strongly supports creation of a Veteran's Court in Hawaii.**

**We realize that bills and a resolution asking the Chief Justice to create such a special court did not pass last year, but a Judiciary committee was set up to study the issue as the resolution had requested.**

**Now just two years after the first such municipal court was created in Buffalo, NY, more than a dozen cities or counties and several states have followed that pattern. The reported results show great success in high graduation rates and far lower recidivism. These courts work, and with Hawaii's statewide judicial system, it will be even more equitable.**

**We hope that the Chief Justice and his administrative staff can find the resources for a Veteran's Court, placed where they think best and staffed with committed judges. Our organization will recruit peer mentors if that is appropriate and I am sure that other veteran's organizations will as well.**

**Please ensure that the Judiciary has the appropriate legal authority to create such a court and do not allow the issue of available resources to deter initiation of such an important process.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.**